



THE FOWWOS NEWS

Newsletter of *FRIENDS OF WEST WINDSOR OPEN SPACE*

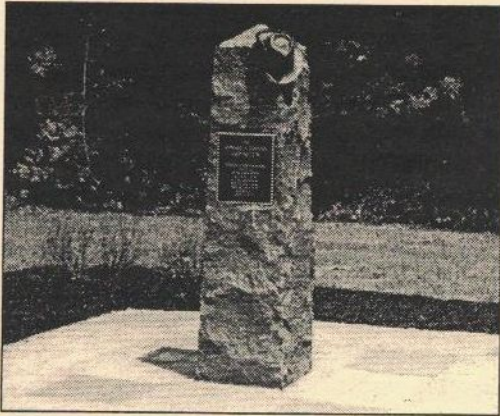
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ARBORETUM MONUMENT UNVEILED

This year's Arbor Day celebration was the occasion for members of the Rogers family to unveil the granite monument honoring Ronald R. Rogers at the site of the arboretum that bears his name. Arboretum committee chairman Harley Pickens led the April 21 proceedings during which the significance of Arbor Day was explained and Township officials described progress in the development of the arboretum, located at the corner of Clarksville and Hightstown Roads.

The monument was designed by Rob White, architect and long-time friend of Ron Rogers. It features a bronze replica of Rogers' field hat by sculptor Michelle Post. ❖



SIX NEW OPEN SPACE PURCHASES

Six more properties have been approved for purchase under the Township's open space preservation program. Their 127 acres bring the total of land preserved as open space to nearly 1,500 acres. Two of the properties, located adjacent to the Amtrak line where it crosses the Millstone River, will become a part of the State Heritage

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RECREATION AND WEST WINDSOR'S OPEN SPACE

Much of West Windsor's preserved open space can and eventually will be devoted to recreational use—both active and passive. With the latest acquisitions (see map on p. 3), nearly 1,500 acres have now been preserved. Of this, nearly 450 are open, environmentally unconstrained acres that could be used for active recreation. Portions of another 544 acres that include wetlands, forests and other environmentally constrained land, could be devoted to passive recreation. The remainder of the preserved open space is farmland, which, while it is being farmed, is not available for public use.

Two years ago the Mayor's Open Space Task Force studied the Township's recreational programs and assessed the needs for new playing fields and other facilities. In addition, an inventory was taken of all the facilities available for these programs, including those of the Township, the schools, private owners, and the County. At that time, nearly 4,000 children were actively involved in Township-sponsored organized sports programs. It was found that the Township's open space acquisitions provided sufficient land to meet the needs for these programs well into the future, but that further facility development was needed.

The West Windsor Recreation Department has been actively pursuing the development of new facilities and the improvement of existing ones for several years. Of particular interest is the plan now under study for a second major recreational center and park, this to be located on the 164-acre former Maneely property in the north-western section. The new park will provide a variety of recreational opportunities that are now

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Friends Of West Windsor Open Space

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In Memoriam

Bernt Midland (1927-1998), Founder
Gil Gilmore (1922-1998)
Ron Rogers (1929-1999)

E-mail: ek61@juno.com or FOWWOS@yahoo.com
Web site: www.princetonol.com/groups/fowwos/
Meetings: First and third Tuesdays at
Town Hall, 7:30 p.m.

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Recreation and W. W. Open Space, cont.

lacking in that part of the township. Preliminary plans call for the inclusion of playing fields for several of the most popular organized sports, including soccer, baseball, softball, and lacrosse.

It has been proposed that the park be called Duck Pond Park for the Duck Pond Run waterway that traverses the site. Wooded and other natural portions of the tract will remain undeveloped. ☺

LIAO SITE DEDICATED

On May 20 FOWWOS members and Township officials met at the former Chou-Liao-Lin property on North Post Road to dedicate a stone marker that symbolizes the families' contribution toward the Township's purchase of the site. The marker bears a bronze plaque with the inscription:

THESE 28 ACRES
ARE PRESERVED BY THE GENEROSITY OF THE
CHOU, LIAO AND LIN FAMILIES
AND THE TAXPAYERS OF WEST WINDSOR
WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE
FRIENDS OF WEST WINDSOR OPEN SPACE
THIS PROPERTY IS NOW FOREVER OWNED BY THE
CITIZENS OF WEST WINDSOR

JULY 2000

The photo shows Hanna and Tom Liao with Mayor Carole Carson and Adam Schuit as Hanna prepares to "christen" the marker with a bottle of champagne. ☺



NEW POLICY ENCOURAGES LAND DONATION

West Windsor has just made it easier for property owners who wish to donate a portion of their land to the Township for preservation as open space. In such a transaction the donor, by reducing the size of his property, also reduces his tax bill, while the Township gains new open space at no additional cost.

Until now, a potential donor would have to go through procedures for creating a subdivision of the donated land and would have to pay fees totaling as much as \$7,000 just for the privilege of giving away a few acres. Under a new policy, initiated by FOWWOS and recently approved by Township Council, all such Township fees will be waived in cases where the subdivided land is to be donated to the Township or a nonprofit organization such as FOWWOS, and where the owner certifies that the remaining land will not be developed beyond its current level.

The subdivision procedures, of course, were intended to apply—and still do—to cases where the land is to be developed for housing or other profitable use. The Township ordinances had no provision for a case where a land owner simply wanted to give a portion of his land away for nothing. In the first instance to which the new policy will apply the required fees are many times the donor's potential tax saving.

The creation of a new subdivision is still necessary because that is the only legal mechanism for dividing property into two or more portions, but now, in this special case, this can be done at no cost to the owner.

The policy statement was drafted by FOWWOS director and Council Member-elect Alison Miller. Council is now considering making the new policy a formal ordinance. In addition, FOWWOS is considering a method by which it can reimburse the donor for additional costs associated with the gift, such as personal legal or engineering expenses. ☺

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:
FREE MONEY TO PRESERVE OPEN SPACE**

The State of New Jersey will give FOWWOS free money—up to \$15,000 a year (in addition to the Green Acres grants we get)—toward preserving West Windsor's open space. However, to tap into this waiting pot we need the help of our members. All that's required is time spent walking our streets, roads, and parks, or around our schools, picking up and disposing of trash. Just keep track of the time you spend and fill out a form that gives the date you picked it up, where you did it, and how long it took. It's all on the honor system. For every hour someone 16 years old or older spends at the task, the State gives the Township \$8. For anyone under 16, the rate is \$4. The Township then gives the money to FOWWOS.

There's no limit to the time you put in, but the total funding for a year cannot exceed \$15,000. It's an easy way to support the FOWWOS open space preservation effort. Individuals, families, and organized groups, can take part, and you don't have to let anyone know ahead of time. Simply go out where you see trash on the road or in a field (but not private property), pick it up, and keep track of how long you spent doing it. Put it in a garbage bag and put it out with your own trash.

A Clean Streets form can be downloaded from the FOWWOS web page, or call me at 799-4868 and I'll mail you one. Then fill it out and mail it in. If you want to organize a group effort, call me.

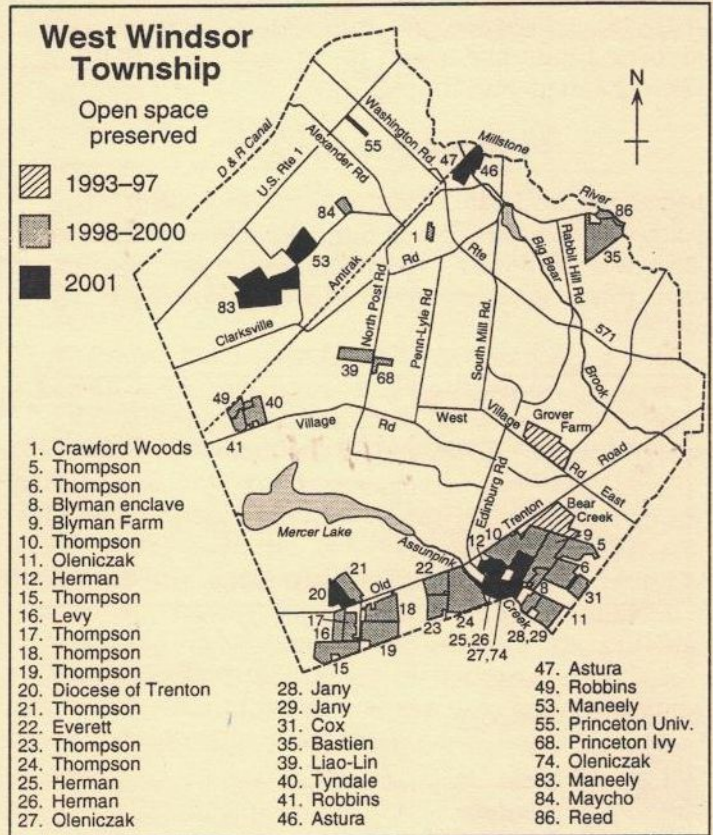
You may say, "Well, the Township always looks pretty clean to me. I don't see much trash around where I live." Look around. Check out some of the main roads, especially near shopping centers. There's always trash there, sometimes in great abundance. Picking up that kind of trash is not the Township's job or the County's. If we help out, it's a win-win-win situation—FOWWOS gets money for preserving our open space, our streets get cleaned up, and you may get community service hours from your organization.

In our busy lives we all love to multi-task. So here is another way—when you take a walk or walk your dog, pick up litter along the way, keep track of your time, and submit your hours on the Clean Streets form. You'll be surprised how quickly the hours—and the money for preserving open space—add up! But please accompany all children, watch for traffic, and wear gloves.

As an added incentive, awards will be given by FOWWOS to the adult and child posting the most hours picking up trash by the end of the year. The adult (16 or older) will receive a FOWWOS tee shirt and the child will receive a FOWWOS cap. At least seven hours will be required for each. ☺

Open Space Purchases, cont.

trail, a series of undeveloped parcels that one day will connect the Revolutionary War battlefields of Mercer and Monmouth Counties. Three other properties, located on Windsor Road, were purchased from Max Herman. The final site, purchased from the Diocese of Trenton, is located on Old Trenton Road adjacent to Mercer County Park. ☺



THANKS FOR A SUCCESSFUL RUN!

With the pending change in Township administration, it is fitting that on behalf of the FOWWOS membership the editors of *The FOWWOS News* extend our thanks to the outgoing leadership for a job well done in preserving 1,389 acres of open space in less than three years. This is well over half the acreage listed for preservation on the inventory of open space properties. Mayor Carson and her team, in particular Sam Surtees, Director of Community Development, and Bill Benfer, Chairman of the Mayor's Open Space Acquisition Task Force, have done a remarkable job of negotiating sales agreements with the owners of 38 properties. With the unfailing support of the Township Council, this effort has put West Windsor at the forefront of the open space preservation effort in the State. We wish the new administration under Mayor-elect Shing-Fu Hsueh continued success in this effort. ☺

NEW DEP GRANT FOR FOWWOS

The NJ Green Acres Program has awarded a new \$450,000 matching grant to FOWWOS for the preservation of additional open space. This is the second such grant received by FOWWOS in the past two years. To receive the money, FOWWOS must provide a matching amount from other sources, including the Township and nonprofit organizations such as itself. Members who may have suggestions for raising the matching funds are urged to contact FOWWOS or attend the next meeting. ☞

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Secretary Elliot Kleiman reports that the current membership is 593. This is an increase of 206 over last year. If you have not yet done so, please renew your membership or join FOWWOS now. ☞

UNDERSTORIES

News on Web Site & Via E-mail: News of current interest continues to be posted on our web site and will now also be sent via e-mail.

E-mail Addresses Wanted: We invite all members who have e-mail addresses to let us know what they are so FOWWOS can communicate current activities and news more effectively.

Employer Matching Gifts: We urge all members to consider asking their employers to make matching gifts to FOWWOS. Many companies have such programs that result in tax benefits for both employer and employee.

Pavers for Ron Rogers Arboretum: Applications for the purchase of arboretum pavers can be obtained from Harley Pickens (799-0060).

FOWWOS Caps and T-shirts: These can be purchased for \$10 each from Harley Pickens. Proceeds support the Ron Rogers Arboretum. ☞

To join FOWWOS

Send name and address to:

FOWWOS
P.O. Box 73
West Windsor, NJ 08550

Enclose dues check made out to FOWWOS for one of the following memberships:

Regular (family)	\$25.00 per year
Silver	\$50.00 " "
Gold	\$75.00 " "

Membership dues and contributions are fully tax deductible.



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Open
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